The Mayors' Institute on City Design

Summer 2002 Newsletter

Volume 12 / Issue 2

2
Louisville Waterfront Becomes an Important Amenity for Attracting Downtown Residents

4
Community Design Centers: Professional Resources for Low- and Moderate-Income Communities

5
Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. receives AAF Keystone Award

•••

Treasure Valley Futures Project Receives Ahwahnee Award

•••

National Endowment for the Arts Offers Grants to Organizations

6/7
Events and Announcements

Children Playing in the Fountain at the Louisville Kentucky Waterfront

Mayor David Armstrong of Louisville, Kentucky

Transbay 20/20 Workshop
SMWM PLANNING

Louisville Waterfront Becomes an Important Amenity for Attracting Downtown Residents

"My experience at the MICD sessions reinforced my thoughts that you want to create a space for people to live in that they will enjoy," remembers Mayor Armstrong. With strong participatory leadership and attention to design, Louisville has been able to create a memorable, functional and enjoyable public space.

Mayor David Armstrong

The City of Louisville is nicknamed "River City" in reference to the city's early cultural and economic dependence on the Ohio River. In 1972, however, an elevated highway was built along Louisville's waterfront district, cutting off the industrial riverfront from the downtown. As in other cities, this highway served mainly to take workers out of the city to homes in the suburbs. However, this particular highway was also an integral part of a major east-west interstate highway, so when the city wanted to redevelop its riverfront and reconnect it to the city, rerouting traffic and removing the highway, as many cities have done in recent years, was not an option.

When former Mayor Jerry Abramson (MICD 12 1992) was elected in 1985, he recognized the intertwined interests of a variety of city, county and state agencies. In 1986, when he initiated the creation of the Louisville Waterfront Development Corporation (WDC) to coordinate the redevelopment of the riverfront, he made sure its fifteen-member board included equal representation by the City of Louisville, Jefferson County and the Governor of Kentucky.

In 1991, the City hired San Francisco-based Hargreaves Associates to develop a master plan for the waterfront. George Hargreaves continued an open and integrated public planning process started by the WDC that ultimately included over thirty workshops and presentations with community members, as well as coordination and review with numerous city, state, county and federal agencies. Large public presentations were hosted by the performing arts center and broadcast on local television.

The result of this activity was a decision to maintain significant open space on the riverfront. "The message from the people was pure park," explained David Karem, Executive Director of the WDC. "The other message was connectivity to the city. Don't just build a park, connect it to the people." In 1992, Mayor Abramson attended the Mayors' Institute in Charlottesville, VA, where he presented the waterfront as his design issue. One of the main points of discussion was the distinction between successful, articulated public places and banal, unmemorable public spaces.

Visual connection from downtown is perhaps the most critical aspect of the ultimate success of Louisville's waterfront park. With the support of Mayor Abramson, Hargreaves was able to persuade officials to reconfigure a number of surface streets and move a highway on-ramp that had previously blocked views of the river from downtown. Although not technically part of the park design, this infrastructure work was a prerequisite to achieving the goal of connecting the park "to the people." Mayor Abramson understood and supported the need to connect important public spaces in the city.

Even with the highway on-ramp moved, however, the river itself was not visible from street level downtown. The public's request for a large-scale park permitted Hargreaves to gradually slope the park towards the river. This slope allows for direct views of the river and visually draws people beyond the highway overpass. This solution simultaneously addresses an important technical concern by allowing periodic flooding.

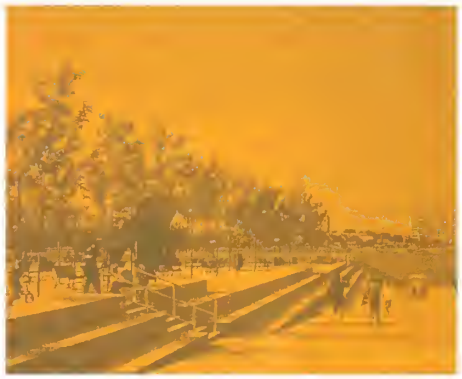
In 1998, Mayor David Armstrong (MICD 26 1999) assumed office, where he became instrumental in obtaining funding to complete Phase I. The budget included $12.5 million from the state, $4 million from Jefferson County and $10.5 million from the City, spread over four to six years. The financial plan also called for $8.75 million from private sources as an endowment to provide interest income to help maintain the park. Phase I was completed and dedicated on July 4, 1999.

Mayor Armstrong remains committed to completing Phases II and III of the original design. "My primary goal is to bring people back to the city to live." Indeed, Mayor Armstrong's innovative Downtown Housing Fund recently received an Outstanding Achievement Award from the U.S. Conference of Mayors. "We can and must work to realize the potential of our inner city neighborhoods and downtowns as unique and special places to live, work, and raise families."

The waterfront park is an important amenity for attracting downtown residents. There is significant new infill development and redevelopment of the historic business district next to the park, including a corporate headquarters, baseball stadium and a thirty-story apartment tower overlooking the park. It is estimated that there will be over $100 million in additional investment over the next five to ten years.

Phase II, currently under construction, is a $41 million project to build additional park space on 30 acres of land along the Ohio River east of the current park. It includes the rehabilitation of an abandoned railroad bridge as a pedestrian connection across the river, recreational fields, a children's play area, a rowing center for the University of Louisville women's rowing team and a 2,000-person amphitheater.

Hargreaves' design was recently honored with one of only five national Honor Awards given annually by the American Society of Landscape Architects. "The public acceptance of the park has exceeded anything we ever hoped for," Karem says. "It's drawing from every sector of the community." Over 200,000 people visit the park annually and attendance at all events last year exceeded 1.25 million people.[2]



Views of the Louisville Waterfront showing expanses of green space and public gathering areas

HARGREAVES ASSOCIATES, PHOTO JOHN GOLLINGS

Facing Page: "Connected to the people", the Louisville Waterfront

HARGREAVES ASSOCIATES, PHOTO GEOFFREY CARR

Inset: Louisville Waterfront at night

HARGREAVES ASSOCIATES, PHOTO JOHN GOLLINGS

Community Design Centers:

Professional Resources for Low- and Moderate-Income Communities

Community design centers are non-profit organizations that work with neighborhood residents to communicate and discuss design issues among numerous segments of civic society. Often, these centers represent the only local resources for neighborhood revitalization, and can play a pivotal role in neighborhood design.

Boston Central Artery Workshop
SMWM PLANNING

Urban neighborhoods are impacted by interrelated political, financial, social, and technical influences that are, in turn, affected by the design of the built environment. Cities often strive to involve a diverse group of residents and stakeholders in development projects. Too often, a vocal few dominate processes that should involve broad participation.

Community design centers are a relatively recent phenomenon that has risen to address this issue. They are non-profit organizations that work with neighborhood residents to communicate and discuss design issues among numerous segments of civic society. These design centers serve the larger community as the client, instead of corporations, developers, or other more traditional, singular clients. Often, these centers represent the only local resource for neighborhood revitalization, and can play a pivotal role in neighborhood design. Many people are uncomfortable standing up at a public meeting and speaking, or articulating their ideas in writing. A process that uses a mixture of pictures and drawings, photographs, written statements and dialogue to elicit new ideas can encourage the diversity of voices essential to comprehensive community planning.

According to research from the National Endowment for the Arts, there are over eighty programs and centers providing affordable design services to local communities across the country. Of these, 70% are affiliated with universities. Programs in less densely populated areas of the country tend to serve larger regions, while programs in more urbanized areas tend to localize their efforts to specific districts and neighborhoods.

Representing a cross-section that illustrates the diversity and activities of community design centers are those in New Orleans, LA; Troy, NY; and Minneapolis, MN. The Tulane Regional Urban Design Center (TRUDC) in New Orleans is based within the Tulane School of Architecture and has been particularly active in supporting the design leadership of city mayors regionally through follow-up activities to regional and national MICD sessions. TRUDC Director, Grover E. Mouton, III, has worked primarily with cities in Louisiana and the Gulf Coast region, but has coordinated community outreach and participatory design activities as far away as Augusta, GA with Mayor Bob Young (1999 MICD: South).

Conversely, the Troy Architectural Project (TAP) is an independent nonprofit organization, focused on the specific social and economic challenges of the City of Troy. For over thirty years, TAP has played a significant role in the development of high quality, comprehensive design solutions that address the needs of low- and moderate-income homeowners. In contrast to this activist approach, the University of Minnesota Design Center for the American Urban Landscape (DCAUL) engages in "applied urban design research," emphasizing broader public education as much as specific design solutions. By helping all citizens to become better educated about their communities and environments, DCAUL ensures a broad representation of concerns in public projects.

These three design centers illustrate a diversity of approaches to community design centers: regional vs. local, activist vs. academic, design vs. research. One is funded almost entirely by the host institution, one is wholly supported by income related to their services, and one balances institutional support and project fees. A feature they all share, however, is that the directors and staff of the centers are committed to a particular neighborhood or area.

Community design centers can serve as unique resources for mayors and city officials. By soliciting input from residents and organizing opportunities for dialogue, a participatory design process can often incorporate minor changes that build neighborhood support for new projects, rather than engendering fear and mistrust. Design centers utilize a participatory design process in order to facilitate broad civic engagement. They measurably improve both the physical and the civic environment as a result.

Online Resources:

Association for Community Design (ACD)
http://www.communitydesign.org

Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA)
http://www.acsa-arch.org

Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR)
http://www.adpsr.org

AIA Center for Livable Communities (AIA)
http://www.aia.org/gov/livable/

Comprehensive List of Community Design Centers
http://www.communitydesign.org/cgi-bin/pub.cgi

Recommended reading:

http://www.rose-network.com/resources/reading_top10.html

News

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Receives AAF Keystone Award

Joseph P. Riley, Jr. (MICD 1 1986) received the third **AAF Keystone Award** at the Accent on Architecture gala on March 1. The award recognizes exemplary leadership that advances the Foundation's vision of a society that participates in shaping its environment through an understanding of the power of architecture to enrich lives and transform communities.

Mayor Riley is motivated by a simple but powerful vision. "A city should be a place with such beauty and order that it is inspirational. A key component of urban design is a belief in the value of the public realm, which every citizen owns. If we are a nation where all the finest zones are privately owned, then what we own together is not very much. The greatest cities are those with the most beautiful public places, and that is what we have sought to achieve in Charleston."

National Endowment for the Arts Offers Grants to Organizations

The National Endowment for the Arts provides national recognition and support to significant projects of artistic excellence, thus preserving and enhancing our nation's diverse cultural heritage. The Arts Endowment funds projects in a wide variety of disciplines - including design. Design grants are available in the following areas: architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, and planning.

Upcoming grant deadlines are available for projects that support the Arts Endowments categories of **Access** and **Heritage and Preservation.** Access grants provide funding to make quality art as broadly available as possible. Heritage and Preservation grants support efforts to keep our cultural heritage intact by recovering and preserving our artistic achievements.

This grant assistance is available to nonprofit organizations and state and local governments. Applications may request amounts between $5,000 and $150,000, though the Arts Endowment awards far more grants for $25,000 or less than for $75,000 or more. Additionally, all grants must be matched dollar for dollar from other sources. Applications are due by August 12, 2002.

Visit *http://www.arts.gov* for more information or contact Susan Begley, Design Specialist, at (202) 682-5796.

Treasure Valley Futures Project Receives Ahwahnee Award

The Treasure Valley Futures project was awarded the **2001 Ahwahnee Award** Certificate of Merit for Regional Initiatives. The award recognizes projects and programs that create a better quality of life for residents and the region as a whole. The Ahwahnee Award is sponsored by the Local Government Commission, Bank of America, American Institute of Architects—California Council and the California Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Treasure Valley Futures is a regional initiative of mayors and county council members in the Treasure Valley of Idaho, which includes Boise (**Mayor Brent Coles**, MICD: West 1994), Caldwell (**Mayor Garret Nancolas**, MICD: West 1998), and Nampa (**Mayor Tom Dale**, MICD: West 2002). Treasure Valley Futures is a non-profit organization that exists to study the links between transportation and land-use in the Treasure Valley.

Recent Events

MICD: 30

October 2001
La Jolla, CA
Salk Institute

Robert Campbell, FAIA
architect, journalist

Elizabeth Deakin
transportation, land-use planner

William Gilchrist, AIA
architect, planner

James Reagan
real estate consultant

Tom Leader
landscape architect

Brian Shea, AIA
architect, urban designer

Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Hon. AIA
mayor and keynote speaker

Marion Weiss, AIA
architect, urban designer

Ralph Appezzato *Alameda, CA*
The City is in the process of selecting an architect for a new library, to be built on the site of an old motel near the city's civic core. How can the design of the new library contribute to the effort to create an active and vital civic space?

R. Mark Asmundson *Bellingham, WA*
The City is seeking ideas for the redevelopment of an industrial site near its historical center. What kind of development can stimulate additional development in what is now a brownfield area blighted by underutilized properties?

Kay Barnes *Kansas City, MO*
The City has three distinct "downtowns," spread over a distance of approximately five miles along Main Street. What strategies can the city use to link these healthy nodes of development?

Michael Coleman *Columbus, OH*
The Mount Vernon neighborhood was once a center of African-American business and culture, but is now mostly residential, with many vacant lots. What steps can be taken to make an immediate difference in residents' quality of life while pursuing long-term goals of reversing decline?

Gary Doty *Duluth, MN*
The City wants to develop waterfront property for a festival park, visitors' center and mixed-use commercial development. How can the City attract partners for a public/private partnership to develop and further enhance the waterfront?

Heather Fargo *Sacramento, CA*
Reconnecting the riverfront to the rest of Sacramento has been a high priority for the City for many years. What is the best place along the riverfront for a vibrant park, and what kinds of amenities would you build?

Steve Kirchhoff *Bozeman, MT*
A large area at the eastern gateway to the City presents an opportunity to provide affordable and pedestrian-oriented housing alternatives. How should the City evaluate proposals for this site, and what elements should be incorporated?

Shelia Young *San Leandro, CA*
In the 1970's, when most downtowns declined due to the arrival of modern shopping centers, the City's central plaza fell into disrepair. How should the plaza be redesigned and returned to the community as an important civic space?

MICD: West

April 2002
Austin, TX
University of Texas, Austin

Mario Campos, AIA
architect, landscape architect

Donna Carter, AIA
architect

Jeffrey M. Chusid
architect, historian

Terry Goddard
former mayor

Norman R. Millar
architect, educator

Frederick Steiner
planner, educator

William Williams
architect

Lara L. Blakely *Monrovia, CA*
The Monrovia Transit Village represents an opportunity to revitalize an important section of the community. How can the City integrate living and working space with a transportation facility?

Tom Dale *Nampa, ID*
The need to revitalize the downtown has been a topic of debate for two decades. How can the City maintain the historical flavor of downtown through traffic management, design standards, façade improvements and infill development?

Matthew Godfrey *Ogden, UT*
There are plans to redevelop the area along the Ogden River. What design features can help connect the river and the downtown?

Danny Gray *Texarkana, AR*
James Bramlet *Texarkana, TX*
The state line bisects downtown, where a plaza is planned for significant piece of public art. What are the appropriate subject, medium and scale for such a piece to unify the historic district?

Judie Hammerstad *Lake Oswego, OR*
The City has acquired a half-acre site on the shore of Oswego Lake. Since the community's long-time goal has been to have visual access to the lake, should development be considered?

Cristina Cruz Madrid *Azusa, CA*
Integrating neighborhoods and commercial "mini-malls" is a challenge. How can better design improve this integration while maintaining the economic viability of such a facility?

Joe Ochoa *Edinburg, TX*
The Downtown Heritage Corridor links various historical sites in the downtown area. How can the City encourage revitalization and preservation along the Downtown Heritage Corridor?

Susan Thornton *Littleton, CO*
The City is initiating a transit-oriented development on 160 acres at the terminus of a light rail line to Denver. How can the City develop this land, located between a major highway, shopping area and a 600 acre nature preserve?

MICD: 31

April 2002
Charleston, SC
South Carolina Aquarium

Laurie Hawkinson
architect

Ray Huff
architect

Mary Margaret Jones
landscape architect

Ignacio F. Bunster-Ossa, ASLA
landscape architect

Robert Peck
real estate executive

Richard Sommer
architect, educator

Alex Washburn, AIA
architect, public policy

Irma L. Anderson *Richmond, CA*
The existing Richmond Station is important for its regional connections to Amtrak, light rail and bus service. How can the City energize the land surrounding the station with uses that are integrated with the existing neighborhood?

Bill Baarsma *Tacoma, WA*
The City has received two proposals to develop a parking lot nearby the Tacoma Dome. How can the City ensure a well-planned, mixed-use area that is urban and provides a sense of place?

Marty Blum *Santa Barbara, CA*
As the City's population and geographic boundaries have expanded outward, the historic central plaza has languished. How can the plaza be redesigned to function as a cultural center?

Raymond Caballero *El Paso, TX*
How can the closing of Main Street and the construction of a new parking structure be used to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment in the Civic Center area?

Ed Garza *San Antonio, TX*
Some historic buildings are hidden behind false facades along Fredricksburg Road. How can the City enhance the economic vitality and the architectural integrity of these buildings?

Karen Geraghty *Portland, ME*
In an effort to spur redevelopment, the City has utilized intense public involvement to develop "A New Vision for Bayside." How can the City develop an implementation plan that will attract the support of developers and existing residents?

Doug Scott *Rockford, IL*
East of the City's South Main business district is a 20-acre brownfield site. How can the City develop a master plan that will enhance the existing facility and the immediate surroundings?

Francis Slay *St. Louis, MO*
The City would like to see residential development adjacent to the river, while maintaining parking. How can these uses be combined to maximize the site's potential?

Announcements

The **American Planning Association National Planning Awards** honor excellence in plans, individuals, and organizations. The master plan for the Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers in St. Louis, MO (**Mayor Francis Slay**, MICD 31 2002) received the 2002 APA Current Topic Award: Planning for Heritage Areas and Sustainable Tourism. APA's National Distinguished Leadership Award went to Honolulu **Mayor Jeremy Harris** (MICD 22 1997). The Model Blocks Program in Fort Worth, TX (**Mayor Kenneth Barr**, MICD 24 1998) received the APA Opportunity and Empowerment Award. Deadlines for the 2003 Awards begin in September. Contact For additional information contact Denny Johnson at APA's Public Affairs Department at djohnson@planning.org or call (202) 872-0611.

The **American Institute of Architects** announced the 2002 Honor Awards for outstanding regional and urban design. Selected from among 63 submissions, the four winning initiatives include *A Vision Plan for Pittsburgh's Riverfronts* (**Mayor Tom Murphy**, MICD 27 2000).

The Amtrak Board of Directors on February 22 elected Meridian **Mayor John Robert Smith** (MICD 25 1999) as Chairman of the Board. Mayor Smith has served as a member of the board since June 1998 and succeeds former Chairman and U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson.

3Com Corporation announced its fourth round of Urban Challenge Grant winners during the 70th Winter Meeting. Winners of this year's Urban Challenge Grant Awards include Alameda, CA, **Mayor Ralph J. Appezzato** (MICD 30 2001), Albuquerque, NM, **Mayor Martin Chavez** (MICD 19 1995), and New Haven, CT, **Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.** (MICD 16 1994)

The U.S. Conference of Mayors Public/Private Partnerships 2001 Awards in Excellence were announced at the Conference's Winter Meeting in New York City. Award winners included Indianapolis, IN, **Mayor Bart Petersen** (MICD 29 2001), Sacramento, CA, **Mayor Heather Fargo** (MICD 30 2001), Lansing, MI, **Mayor David Hollison** (MICD 26 1999) and Orlando, FL, **Mayor Glenda Hood** (MICD 15 1993).

The National Conference of Democratic Mayors elected former U.S. Conference President, Denver, CO, **Mayor Wellington E. Webb** (MICD 19 1995), as its new president, Albuquerque, NM, **Mayor Martin Chavez** (MICD 19 1995) as vice president for finance, and Trenton, NJ, **Mayor Douglas Palmer** (MICD 12 1992) as Treasurer.

Upcoming Events

MICD: Midwest
Jun 6–8, 2002
Ann Arbor, MI

U.S. Conference of Mayors Summer Meeting
Jun 14–18, 2002
Madison, WI

MICD: 32
Oct 25–27, 2002
La Jolla, CA

MICD: South
Nov 7–9, 2002
Charlotte, NC

Contact the Mayors' Institute for more information.

1620 Eye Street NW, Third Floor | Washington, DC 20006-4005
tel (202) 463-1390 | fax (202) 463-1392 | web www.micd.org

The Mayors' Institute on City Design

1620 Eye Street NW, Third Floor
Washington, DC 20006-4005

Summer 2002

Non-Profit
US Postage
P A I D
Permit No. 4780

National Endowment for the Arts

United States Conference of Mayors

American Architectural Foundation

The Mayors' Institute on City Design Newsletter

The Mayors' Institute on City Design is an initiative established by the **National Endowment for the Arts** and administered through a partnership with the United States Conference of Mayors and the American Architectural Foundation. The Mayors' Institute is dedicated to improving the design and livability of America's Cities.